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ABSTRACT

This report is the second based on data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) providing a portrait of the well-being of children and their daily activities. The report highlights a variety of indicators that portray children's experiences at home and at school, and includes findings about parents' feelings toward their children and a comparison of children from one- and two-parent families. The statistics are based on data collected in the child well-being module of the 1996 SIPP panel, administered from December 1999 through March 2000 to 10,445 designated parents and their 19,411 children. Indicators examined in this report relate to: (1) daily interactions (children never living away from home, mealtimes shared, daily interaction with fathers, praising/talking to child, reading interaction, family television rules, and family outings); (2) extracurricular activity participation (clubs, sports, and lessons); (3) academic achievement (academically on-track, gifted class enrollment, changing schools, grade repetition, suspension); (4) educational expectations for children; and (5) parents' feelings toward their children (such as child taking up more time than expected and parent anger with child). Among the major findings are that relative to children living with a single parent, children living with married parents tended to have more daily interaction with their parents, experienced more television viewing restrictions, were read to more often, were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, and progressed more steadily in school. Parents' educational attainment was positively related to reading to children, television rules, child extracurricular activity participation, gifted class enrollment, and expected child educational attainment; educational attainment was negatively

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related to grade repetition and suspension. Parents' feelings toward their children related to parent age, marital status, poverty status, number of children, and race/ethnicity. (KB)

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A Child's Day: 2000 (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being)

Household Economic Studies

Issued August 2003

P70-89

Current Population Reports

By
Terry A. Lugaila

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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This is the second report based on data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) which provides a portrait of the well-being of children and their daily activities.[1] This report addresses the topics presented in the initial report, such as reading interaction, extracurricular activities, and academic achievement and presents some new ones: how frequently children have meals with their parents and parents' feelings toward their children. These aspects of growing up are important topics for study in light of the changes in family life and composition that have been occurring in recent years, such as the significant proportion of children currently growing up in single-parent families.[2]

Previous research established a link between family structure and various measures of child development and well-being.[3] Children in two-parent families fare better developmentally than children in single-parent families, with children of divorced parents having the most problems. In addition, children living with two biological parents are less likely to have problems than children living with

[1] Jason Fields, Kristin Smith, Loretta Bass and Terry Lugaila, *A Child's Day: Home, School, and Play (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being).* Current Population Reports, P70-68. U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2001.

[2] Jason Fields, *Living Arrangements of Children: Fall 1996.* Current Population Reports, P70-74. U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2001.

[3] Robert Hauser, Brett Brown, and William Prosser (editors), *Indicators of Children's Well-Being,* Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1997.

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Table 1.
Children Under 18 Years Old by Marital Status and Sex of Designated Parent: 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	All children		Under 6 years old		6 to 11 years old		12 to 17 years old	
	Number	90-percent confidence interval± [1]	Number	90-percent confidence interval± [1]	Number	90-percent confidence interval± [1]	Number	90-percent confidence interval± [1]
Total	71,663	593	23,385	395	24,581	404	23,697	398
Parent female	69,380	588	22,836	391	23,888	399	22,656	390
Parent male	2,282	130	549	64	693	72	1,041	88
Married [2]	51,885	541	17,240	345	17,858	351	16,787	341
Parent female	51,381	539	17,116	344	17,683	349	16,582	339
Parent male	504	62	123	30	176	36	205	39
Separated, divorced, widowed	11,538	287	2,060	124	4,047	173	5,431	200
Parent female	10,172	270	1,872	118	3,619	164	4,691	186
Parent male	1,366	101	188	38	428	57	750	75
Never married	8,240	244	4,085	174	2,676	141	1,480	105
Parent female	7,828	238	3,848	169	2,586	139	1,394	102
Parent male	412	56	237	42	89	26	86	25

[1] This figure added to or subtracted from the estimate provides the 90-percent confidence interval.
[2] Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Wave 12.

one biological parent and one stepparent.[4] Child well-being indicators associated with children of divorced or single parents include low measures of academic achievement (e.g., repeated grades, low marks, low class standing), increased likelihood of dropping out of high school, early childbearing, and increased levels of depression, stress, anxiety, and aggression.

This report highlights a variety of indicators that portray children's experiences both at home and at school, such as daily interactions with parents, including: how frequently children have meals with their parents; how often parents talk to, play with, and praise their children; incidence of reading and going on outings together; and whether parents impose rules about television viewing at home.

The report's school-based indicators range from academic achievement and participation in extracurricular activities to potential problems, such as repeating grades or being suspended from school. In addition, parents were asked about their expectations for the ultimate level of education they want for their children and what they think their children will achieve.

Researchers at various federal agencies were interested in including questions on how parents actually feel about their children in order to get a more nuanced picture than that provided by the usual social and economic indicators. The SIPP data are used to present findings, for the first time, about parents' feelings toward their children, based on issues, such as difficulty in caring for their children and how often they feel angry with their children. These daily activities, interactions, and behavior patterns are apt to affect children's success over time.

This report also examines the degree to which children who are living with both parents interact with their mothers and their fathers. Of special interest is how children interact with their parents in unmarried-partner households where their mother and their father are living together but are not married to each other, particularly compared with children living in married-couple households.

The statistics in this report are based on data collected in the child well-being module of the twelfth interview of the 1996 SIPP panel, which was administered in the period December 1999 through March 2000.[5] The 2000 SIPP data were collected from a national sample of 10,445 "designated parents" (see definitions box) and

[4] Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur, *Growing Up With a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1994.

[5] The population represented (the population universe) is the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States. Whenever possible, comparable data from past SIPP surveys collected in the fall of 1994 and for the period December 1997 through March 1998 are also shown in this report.

Designated Parent

In the SIPP child well-being module, data are collected about children from a respondent who is identified as the "designated parent." The respondent must be 15 years old or over. The designated parent includes biological, step, and adoptive parents, and may also include other relatives or nonrelatives acting as a guardian for the child in the absence of the parents. In married-couple families, the mother is the designated parent. If the mother is not available for an interview, the father or her husband may provide the mother's information as a proxy respondent. In single-parent families, the resident parent is the designated parent. If neither parent is in the household, the guardian is the designated parent. In this module, 98 percent of the children had their mother assigned as the designated parent. Data from fathers who were the designated parent are included with the data from mothers. People 15 to 17 years old, who themselves may be parents, have their childhood well-being history reported by their parents when they live with them in the household.

their 19,411 children. These responses represented 71.7 million children living in households with at least one parent, or with a guardian in the absence of the parents (Table 1).[4] The majority of these children, 51.9 million, were living with a designated parent who was currently married. Another 11.5 million were living with a designated parent who was either separated, divorced, or widowed, while the remaining 8.2 million were living with a designated parent who had never been married. As shown in Table 1, women made up the vast majority of the designated parents who reported for their children.

DAILY INTERACTIONS

One aspect of child well-being is the type of daily interaction that occurs between children and their parents. This section presents data on everyday occurrences such as eating meals together, talking or playing together, and parents praising their children. Also shown, with comparable data from past SIPP surveys, are reading interactions between child and parent, family rules about television viewing, and family outings in the past month. New data are also presented on the instances of separation of children from their parents.

Children living away from home

An important part of a child-parent relationship is the continuous presence of at least one parent during the child's formative years. For the first time, a SIPP question asked whether the children of the designated parent had ever lived apart from the parent, for any reason, for a month or more. Ninety-five percent of the 72 million children under age 18 had never lived apart from their designated parent for more than a month, assuring some basic stability with at least one parent. Children whose parents experienced a permanent marital disruption—widowhood or divorce—were more likely than children living with a married or never-married parent to have lived apart from their designated parent. About 13 percent of children with a divorced parent and 12 percent of children with a widowed parent had lived apart from their designated parent for a month or more, compared with only 4 percent for children living with married parents, 6 percent living with a never-married parent, and 7 percent of children living with a separated parent.

Mealtimes shared

As Table 2 shows, the majority of children under 6 years have a considerable amount of daily interaction with their parents—ranging from meals together to actual time playing and talking just for fun. For example, about three-fourths of children under age 6 have dinner each day with their designated parent. A slightly greater proportion of children living with married parents (78 percent) than those living with unmarried parents (73 percent) had dinner with at least one designated parent every day of the week.

Slightly more than half of the children under age 6 (53 percent) ate breakfast daily with their designated parent, more often with a married parent than with an unmarried parent (55 compared with 47 percent, respectively). The lower proportions for breakfast meals are not unexpected, as working parents may leave for work early and their children may have breakfast with a child care provider or at school.

Since older children may have more activities both before and after school, they are less likely than younger children to have meals each day with their parents.

[4] The estimates in this report are based on responses from a sample of the population. As with all surveys, estimates may vary from the actual values because of sampling variation or other factors. All comparisons made in this report have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level unless otherwise noted.

Table 2.
Selected Indicators of Daily Interaction of Children Under 18 With Designated Parent or With Father/Stepfather if Present by Marital Status of Designated Parent: 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Children under 6 years old					Children 6 to 17 years old				
		Living with married parents[2]		Living with unmarried parent(s)[3]			Living with married parents[2]		Living with unmarried parent(s)[3]	
		Interaction with		Interaction with			Interaction with		Interaction with	
	Total[1]	Designated parent	Father/stepfather[4]	Designated parent	Father[4]	Total[1]	Designated parent	Father/stepfather[4]	Designated parent	Father[4]
Number of children	**23,385**	**17,240**	**16,649**	**6,145**	**835**	**48,278**	**34,645**	**33,114**	**13,633**	**636**
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION										
Parent ate breakfast with child in typical week										
No days	14.2	12.6	26.0	18.5	34.8	20.5	18.3	30.2	26.1	38.9
1 to 2 days	16.5	15.6	33.1	19.1	25.4	28.7	27.3	33.1	32.3	32.2
3 to 6 days	16.3	16.7	16.5	15.3	8.8	21.5	22.1	17.3	19.9	12.8
7 days	53.0	55.1	24.3	47.2	31.1	29.3	32.3	19.3	21.7	16.1
Parent ate dinner with child in typical week										
No days	5.3	5.0	7.5	6.2	15.2	3.2	2.8	5.0	4.4	3.6
1 to 2 days	3.3	2.8	8.5	4.6	7.0	5.4	4.9	8.9	6.8	8.2
3 to 6 days	15.1	14.6	24.4	16.4	11.3	26.8	27.0	32.1	26.5	17.7
7 days	76.4	77.7	59.7	72.8	66.5	64.5	65.4	54.0	62.4	70.6
Child praised by parent										
Never—once a week	1.8	1.5	2.5	2.6	5.8	5.2	4.6	6.9	6.8	11.8
A few times per week	7.6	6.1	9.7	12.1	17.0	22.7	21.4	26.5	26.0	24.2
Once or twice per day	20.3	19.3	24.8	23.1	23.0	31.3	31.3	30.6	31.2	36.2
Three or more times per day	70.3	73.2	63.0	62.3	54.2	40.9	42.7	36.0	36.1	27.9
Child talked to or played with for 5 minutes or more just for fun										
Never—once a week	1.0	0.4	1.7	2.6	5.8	5.7	4.9	6.8	7.9	8.5
A few times per week	6.5	5.3	10.6	9.7	17.5	19.6	18.7	24.2	22.1	28.6
Once or twice per day	21.1	19.3	27.7	26.2	22.3	33.4	33.0	33.8	34.7	35.0
Three or more times per day	71.4	75.0	60.0	61.5	54.4	41.2	43.4	35.2	35.4	27.9

[1]Totals given refer to questions of designated parents, regardless of sex of parent.
[2]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[3]Includes never married, widowed, divorced, and separated.
[4]Question asked of fathers who were not the designated parents. Fathers must be biological, step- or adoptive and must be present in the household. Percent of children eating meals with fathers does not represent presence of both parents at the meals.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, December 1999 to March 2000.

Sixty-five percent of children aged 6 to 17 had dinner every day with at least one parent, with little difference noted by the marital status of the child's parent. The same proportion, 65 percent, of children living with a married parent had dinner each day with one or more of their parents, compared with 62 percent of children living with an unmarried parent.

The breakfast structures of older and younger children differed dramatically. Only 29 percent of children 6 to 17 years old had breakfast each morning with a parent, compared with 53 percent of children under 6 years old. If the child lived with a married parent, the proportion was 32 percent for the older group compared with 55 percent for the younger group. These low proportions for school-age children may be attributed to parents allowing their children to eat breakfast at school.

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Daily interaction with fathers

The survey data indicate that children living with two parents received attention from both of them over the course of the day. The data in Table 2 show daily interactions between child and father/stepfather if the male parent is present in the household and between child and father in unmarried partner households if the child's biological father is also present.[7] They indicate that fathers interacted daily with their children, but usually less frequently than their spouses or unmarried partners. For example, while 55 percent of children under 6 years old living with married parents ate breakfast daily with their mother (or designated parent), only 24 percent ate breakfast on a daily basis with their fathers. Among children living with unmarried parents, about 47 percent of children under 6 years old ate breakfast every day with their mother (or designated parent) but only 31 percent with their father if the biological father was present in the household.

It is interesting to note that mealtime experiences between children and their fathers were similar for children living with married or with unmarried parents when the father was present in the household. The proportion of children under 6 years old who ate breakfast or dinner with their father on all seven days was actually slightly higher among children in unmarried partner households than in married partner households.

[7] For children with married parents, the numbers of designated parents and fathers/stepfathers do not exactly match, as some parents may be married but their spouses are absent from the household (for example, in an institution or in the armed forces). For children living with unmarried parents (including separated), the majority are living with only one parent, usually the mother, but some children may also have their biological father living with them in the household and thus are also asked these daily interaction items.

Praising and talking to the child

The 2000 SIPP asked parents how often they praised or complimented their child by saying, for example, "Good for you" or "Way to go." Overall, 70 percent of children under age 6 received such praise three or more times per day. A higher proportion of children living with a married parent received praise three or more times per day than those living with an unmarried parent (73 percent and 62 percent, respectively).

For the school-age group, only 41 percent received praise three or more times per day, but again the proportion was slightly higher for children living with married parents (43 percent) than with unmarried parents (36 percent). Parents may have more opportunities to praise younger children since older children spend more time at school, on outside activities, and with their peers than younger ones do.

Parents were also asked how often they talked or played with their child for 5 minutes or more, just for fun. Table 2 shows that younger children had more of these interactions with their parents than older children, and children with married parents tended to interact with their parents more often than children with unmarried parents.

Reading interaction

Another indicator of child well-being is how often parents and other family members read to children in the household. The child well-being module included questions about the number of stories read to children who were under 12 years old. Information was collected on the number of times in the past week when children were read stories, not only by the designated parent or the father or the stepfather, but also by other members of the family. Table 3 focuses on reading to children 1 to 5 years old by any family member, while Table 4 shows reading by both parents to children 1 to 11 years old living with married couples and unmarried couples.

Of the 19.6 million children between the ages of 1 and 5 years old in 2000 (Table 3), about 1.6 million children (8 percent) were never read stories in the week preceding the survey by any family member (9 percent for 1- and 2-year-olds and 7 percent for 3- to 5-year-olds). The proportion of 1- and 2-year-olds never read to decreased 4 percentage points from 1994 (from 13 to 9 percent). Half of all children 1 to 5 years old in 2000 were read to seven or more times per week. Of those children read to by their parents, children 1 and 2 years old were read to an average of 7.6 times per week and children 3 to 5 years old were read to 6.8 times per week.

By race and ethnicity, one-quarter of Hispanic children 1 and 2 years old and 17 percent of those 3 to 5 years old were never read to in the week preceding the survey,[8] which is significantly higher than the percentages for non-Hispanic White children and Black children for both age groups.[9] The average

[8] Hispanics may be of any race. Data for the American Indian and Alaska Native population are not shown in this report because of their small sample size in the 1996 panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). Based on the 1996 SIPP Panel, Wave 12 child well-being data, 4 percent of the Black population and 6 percent of the Asian and Pacific Islander population are also of Hispanic origin.

[9] The percents never read to for Black children 1 to 2 years old and 3 to 5 years old (10.9 percent and 12.9 percent, respectively) were not statistically different from each other.

Table 3.
Reading to Children 1 to 5 Years Old by Any Family Member, by Selected Characteristics: 1994 to 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristics	Number of children		Family reading practices					
			Percent never read to last week		Percent of children read to 7 or more times per week		Average times read to child per week[1]	
	1 and 2 years	3 to 5 years	1 and 2 years	3 to 5 years	1 and 2 years	3 to 5 years	1 and 2 years	3 to 5 years
Total children, 2000	**7,830**	**11,780**	**8.6**	**7.4**	**54.8**	**49.0**	**7.6**	**6.8**
Sex of Child								
Female	3,801	5,808	7.9	7.5	55.5	48.8	7.7	6.8
Male	4,029	5,971	9.3	7.4	54.1	49.2	7.5	6.8
Race and Ethnicity of Child								
White	6,177	9,420	7.7	6.1	56.4	51.9	7.9	7.0
Non-Hispanic	5,164	7,631	4.6	3.6	60.9	56.0	8.1	7.3
Black	1,260	1,813	10.9	12.9	47.8	35.5	6.3	5.8
Asian and Pacific Islander	277	391	19.1	10.7	52.3	46.9	8.5	6.3
Hispanic (of any race)	1,063	1,928	23.8	17.2	34.2	34.3	6.1	5.7
Marital Status of Parent								
Married[2]	5,750	8,700	7.2	5.9	57.6	52.0	8.0	7.0
Separated, divorced, widowed	647	1,233	11.7	9.0	49.1	42.5	6.5	6.3
Never married	1,434	1,846	12.9	13.5	46.0	39.2	6.5	5.8
Parent's Educational Level								
High school or less	3,490	5,392	14.1	11.8	44.6	40.0	6.3	6.0
Some college	1,265	2,083	5.7	4.7	58.1	52.7	7.5	7.3
Vocational or associate degree	927	1,399	5.6	3.8	60.3	52.2	8.3	6.6
Bachelor's degree	1,709	2,180	2.9	3.2	66.1	60.9	9.2	7.6
Advanced degree	438	725	3.0	2.3	69.8	63.7	9.4	8.5
Poverty Status[3]								
Below poverty level	1,323	2,006	17.9	13.7	44.3	42.2	6.7	6.0
On or above poverty level	6,296	9,520	6.3	5.9	57.5	50.5	7.8	6.9
100 to 199 percent of poverty	1,681	2,968	10.9	9.0	49.2	44.0	6.7	6.4
200 percent of poverty or higher	4,615	6,552	4.6	4.5	60.5	53.5	8.2	7.2
Total children, 1998	**7,764**	**12,088**	**9.3**	**9.0**	**51.9**	**45.9**	**7.9**	**6.6**
Total children, 1994[4]	**5,777**	**9,375**	**12.8**	**9.1**	**48.2**	**46.5**	**8.9**	**6.8**

[1]Based on children reported as being read to one or more times per week.
[2]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[3]For families with income reported.
[4]Based on those children for whom valid answers were reported (no allocation for nonresponse).

Note: Family members include either parent or any other relative.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data). Current Population Reports, P70-68, Table 5 (1994 data).

number of times per week that a family member read to Hispanic children—6.1 times for ages 1 to 2 and 5.7 times for ages 3 to 5—was not significantly different from each other, but was lower than that reported for non-Hispanic White children (8.1 and 7.3, respectively).

Higher proportions of children living with either a never-married parent or a parent with a high school education or less, or in a family with income below the poverty level, were never read to than their counterparts in other living arrangements and, hence, lower proportions were read to seven or more times per week than children with parents who had ever married, or had more than a high school education, or had a family income 200 percent or more above poverty.

The average number of times per week that a parent read to a child was somewhat higher for children 1 and 2 years old with married

Table 4.
Reading Practices for Children 1 to 11 Years Old With Two Parents in the Household: 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristics	All children with two parents	Children of married couples	Children of unmarried couples[2]
Children 1 to 11 years old with two parents in the household			
Number	32,079	30,999	1,080
Percent distribution	100.0	100.0	100.0
Not read to by any family member	19.4	19.3	22.1
Never by mother:	3.9	4.0	3.3
Never by father[1]	1.9	2.2	2.7
1 to 6 times by father	1.6	1.6	0.6
7 or more times by father	0.4	0.5	-
1 to 6 times by mother:	49.6	49.7	47.6
Never by father	16.6	16.7	14.0
1 to 6 times by father	31.6	31.6	31.5
7 or more times by father	1.4	1.4	2.1
7 or more times by mother:	27.0	27.0	27.0
Never by father	6.5	6.2	10.9
1 to 6 times by father	10.0	9.8	4.4
7 or more times by father	10.5	10.5	11.7
Children 1 to 5 years old with two parents in the household			
Number	14,537	13,915	623
Percent distribution	100.0	100.0	100.0
Not read to by any family member	6.4	6.1	13.4
Never by mother:	3.0	3.0	2.8
Never by father[1]	1.4	1.4	2.6
1 to 6 times by father	1.1	1.1	0.2
7 or more times by father	0.5	0.5	-
1 to 6 times by mother:	51.7	51.7	50.1
Never by father	15.3	15.4	13.7
1 to 6 times by father	34.5	34.6	32.8
7 or more times by father	1.9	1.8	3.7
7 or more times by mother:	38.9	39.1	33.7
Never by father	8.0	7.8	13.2
1 to 6 times by father	14.4	14.8	5.3
7 or more times by father	16.5	16.6	15.2
Children 6 to 11 years old with two parents in the household			
Number	17,542	17,084	458
Percent distribution	100.0	100.0	100.0
Not read to by any family member	30.2	30.0	34.0
Never by mother:	4.7	4.7	3.8
Never by father	2.3	2.3	2.8
1 to 6 times by father	1.9	2.0	1.0
7 or more times by father	0.4	0.4	-
1 to 6 times by mother:	47.9	48.0	44.2
Never by father	17.7	17.8	14.5
1 to 6 times by father	29.3	29.3	29.8
7 or more times by father	1.0	1.0	-
7 or more times by mother:	17.2	17.2	17.9
Never by father	5.3	5.2	7.7
1 to 6 times by father	6.3	6.4	3.2
7 or more times by father	5.6	5.6	7.0

- Represents or round to zero.

[1]Children were read to by another family member, for example, a sibling, but not by their parent.
[2]Includes only children living with both biological or adoptive parents.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Wave 12.

parents than for those with parents who were other than married (8 and 6.5, respectively).

For children 3 to 5 years old, those with married parents were read to 7 times per week, compared with 6.3 times for children of separated, divorced, or widowed parents, and 5.8 times for children of never-married parents.[10]

By educational level, the average number of times per week that parents read to their children was significantly different between those children whose parent had a high school degree or lower and children whose parent had a higher education. For example, children 1 and 2 years old whose parent had a high school degree or lower were read to, on average, 6.3 times per week compared to 9.4 times for children whose parent had an advanced degree.

For 3- to 5-year-olds, there was a significant increase in the average number of times per week that parents read to their children between the lowest and highest levels of education (6 times per week and 8.5 times per week, respectively).[11]

Table 4 shows that, although mothers did the majority of the reading to their children, fathers were also involved. Thirty-two percent of all children 1 to 11 years old were read

[10] The average number of times per week read to for children 3 to 5 years old with separated, divorced, or widowed parents and children 3 to 5 years old with never-married parents (6.3 times and 5.8 times, respectively) were not statistically different from each other. Also, the average number of times per week read to for children with separated, divorced, or widowed parents was not statistically significant between the two age groups (1 and 2 versus 3 to 5).

[11] The average number of times read to children per week was not significantly different between children 1 and 2 years old and children 3 to 5 years old with parents with either a high school degree or below and those with an advanced degree.

Table 5.
Family Television Rules for Children 3 to 17 Years Old by Selected Characteristics: 1994 to 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristics	Number of children			Family television rules					
				Percent with at least one television rule			Percent with three types of television rules		
	3 to 5 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years	3 to 5 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years	3 to 5 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years
Total children, 2000	**11,780**	**24,581**	**23,697**	**89.9**	**92.0**	**72.6**	**64.4**	**69.0**	**41.7**
Sex of Child									
Female	5,808	11,998	11,526	89.0	91.8	71.5	63.3	69.2	40.9
Male	5,971	12,583	12,171	90.7	92.3	73.6	65.5	68.7	42.5
Race and Ethnicity of Child									
White	9,420	19,340	18,678	90.3	92.8	73.5	63.9	68.8	41.1
Non-Hispanic	7,631	15,080	15,301	91.8	93.9	74.2	64.0	68.5	40.3
Black	1,813	4,061	3,745	88.3	89.5	69.6	68.3	69.9	45.6
Asian and Pacific Islander	391	846	834	86.2	88.9	70.2	61.3	69.8	44.8
Hispanic (of any race)	1,928	4,520	3,683	83.7	89.1	69.6	64.2	70.3	44.3
Marital Status of Parent									
Married[1]	8,700	17,858	16,787	91.0	92.8	75.3	66.2	70.5	43.8
Separated, divorced, widowed	1,233	4,047	5,431	89.9	90.9	65.3	63.2	68.1	34.5
Never married	1,846	2,676	1,480	84.4	88.4	68.5	56.9	59.9	44.2
Parent's Educational Level									
High school or less	5,393	11,990	11,665	86.2	89.6	70.2	60.5	66.8	40.0
Some college	2,083	4,385	4,110	92.4	94.1	73.9	64.2	69.5	44.0
Vocational or associate degree	1,399	3,236	3,420	92.2	92.7	75.6	63.0	68.0	41.5
Bachelor's degree	2,180	3,784	3,063	92.9	95.3	76.4	72.0	73.3	43.9
Advanced degree	725	1,186	1,440	96.6	97.1	72.6	74.0	77.5	45.0
Poverty Status[2]									
Below poverty level	2,006	4,379	3,476	84.5	87.4	71.9	59.8	66.0	44.4
On or above poverty level	9,520	19,663	19,861	90.6	93.0	72.7	65.1	69.5	41.3
100 to 199 percent of poverty	2,968	5,956	5,353	88.0	89.4	71.3	64.7	68.0	41.5
200 percent of poverty or higher	6,552	13,707	14,508	91.7	94.6	73.2	65.3	70.1	41.2
Total children, 1998	**12,088**	**24,095**	**23,345**	**89.4**	**93.3**	**75.3**	**61.6**	**65.2**	**41.0**
Total children, 1994[3]	**9,576**	**19,472**	**17,683**	**91.3**	**94.7**	**79.2**	**54.0**	**60.3**	**40.2**

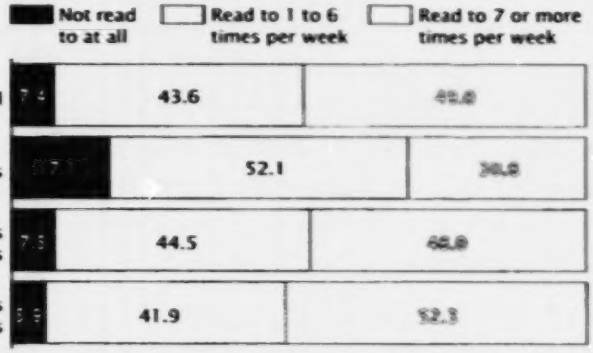
[1]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[2]For families with income reported.
[3]Based on those children for whom valid answers were reported (no allocation for nonresponse).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data). Current Population Reports, P70-68, Table 8 (1994 data).

to one to six times per week by both parents, about the same percentage as children of both married and unmarried couples where the biological father was present. In addition, there was no significant difference between children with married parents and children with unmarried parents in the proportion being read to seven or more times per week by both parents (11 percent and 12 percent, respectively).

Overall, there was no difference between the proportion of children in unmarried-couple families and children in married-couple families who were never read to by any family member (22 percent compared with 19 percent, respectively). By age, however, there was a significant difference for children 1 to 5 years old: 6 percent of children with married parents were never read to by a family member compared to 13 percent of children with unmarried parents. It should be noted that the number of children living with both parents who were unmarried was relatively small (1 million) compared with the number living with both parents who were married (31 million). These data suggest that children and parents interact as a family unit on the issue of reading to children even if the parents are not married to each other.

Figure 1.
Percent Distribution of Number of Times Per Week Family Members Read to Children 3 to 5 Years Old by Presence of Television Rules: 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Wave 12.

Family rules about television

The SIPP child well-being module inquired about constraints placed on children's television (TV) rules by asking if parents imposed rules on any of three issues: type of program watched, time of day (how early or late the TV was on), and the number of hours watched.

In 2000, 84 percent of children 3 to 17 years old (50.4 million) lived in households with at least one type of family TV rule: 90 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds, 92 percent of 6- to 11-year-olds, but only 73 percent of children 12 to 17 years old lived in families with TV rules that pertained to them (Table 5).

About 67 percent of children 3 to 11 years old and 42 percent of children aged 12 to 17 had all three types of TV rules. Parents may think older children are able to make their own choices on TV programs, times of day, and hours watched as they gain maturity and responsibility with age.

Children 3 to 5 years old living with a parent with a high school diploma or less education were less likely to have at least one TV rule (86 percent) than children living with a parent with a bachelor's degree (93 percent) or with an advanced degree (97 percent). Children 3 to 5 years old whose parents had the lowest education were also less likely to have all three types of TV rules (61 percent) compared with 72 percent of children living with a parent with a bachelor's degree or 74 percent with an advanced degree.[12]

Higher proportions of rules for children with a parent having advanced degrees than with a high school education or less were noted within each age group for children 6 to 11 years and 12 to 17 years.

Do parents who exercise stricter control over their children's TV viewing habits spend more time reading to their children than parents who are more lenient in setting TV rules? Figure 1 shows these family decisions and behaviors for children 3 to 5 years old, an age when pre-school reading habits are beginning to develop. More than one-half of children 3 to 5 years old who had three types of television rules were read to by their parents seven or more times per week. Only 6 percent of these children were not read to at all. For children living in families with no TV rules (which included children whose parents may have answered no because no television was in the household), only 31 percent were read to by a family member seven or more times per week, and an additional 17 percent were not read to at all by their parents in the week preceding the survey. More information would be needed to know if some families decide to use TV as a substitute for reading.

Outings in the last month

Children may benefit from experiences outside the household and school settings. The 2000 SIPP asked how many times in the past month the parent or a family member took the child on any kind of outing—for example, to a park, a church, a playground, a grocery store, or a visit with friends or relatives.[13] Of the 48 million children under 12 years old, 2.4 million, or 5 percent, were not taken on outings with a parent or a family member in the past month. The average number of outings per month for children who went on one or more outings was 12.3 times per month.

Figure 2 looks at outings by poverty status and race. Non-Hispanic

[12] The percentage of children 3 to 5 years old with three TV rules living with a parent with a bachelor's degree was not statistically different from the percentage of children 3 to 5 years old with three TV rules living with a parent with an advanced degree.

[13] The survey did not collect information on which of the outings the child went on, just the number of times the child went on any outing.

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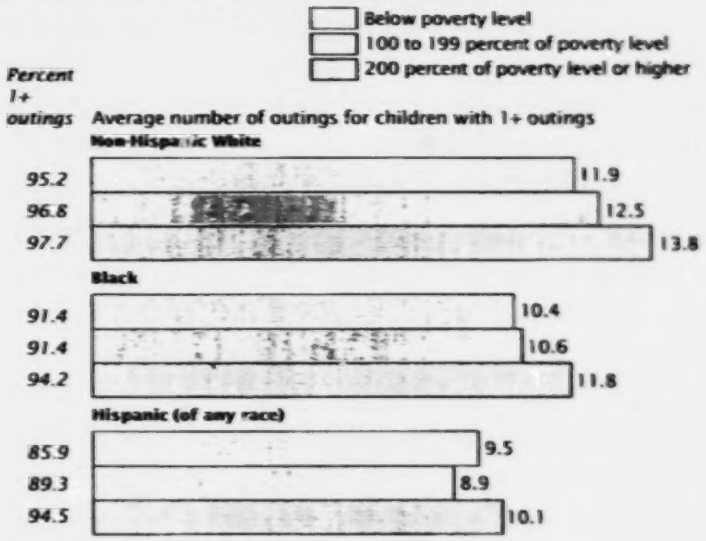
White children experienced more outings than either Black children or Hispanic children, regardless of poverty status. Both non-Hispanic White and Black children were taken on significantly more outings if their family poverty status was 200 percent of poverty or higher than children in families living below the poverty level. The difference in the average number of outings for Hispanic children below the poverty level and those at 100 to 199 percent of poverty (9.5 outings and 8.9 outings, respectively) is not statistically significant; however, Hispanic children living in families at 200 percent of poverty or higher had significantly more outings per month than those living in families at 100 to 199 percent of poverty (10.1 outings and 8.9 outings, respectively).

Figure 2.

Percent of Children Having One or More Outings and Average Number of Outings in the Last Month for Children Under 12 Years Old by Race, Ethnicity, and Family Poverty Status: 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Wave 12.

PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In this report, data about participation in extracurricular activities were limited to children 6 to 17 years old and were based on parents' responses to questions about children's involvement in three extracurricular activities: sports, clubs, and lessons. Participation in sports teams includes those sponsored by schools or those in organized leagues. Clubs include Scouts, a religious group, a Girls or Boys Club, or 4-H activities. Lessons were interpreted very broadly to include those taken after school or on weekends in subjects like music, dance, language, computers, or religion. Examining activities other than attending classes provides a more complete picture of academic experiences than considering grades alone. These activities can influence how a child makes the transition to adulthood.

Nationally, 59 percent of children 6 to 17 years old (28.4 million) participated in at least one of the three extracurricular activities in 2000. Table 6 shows more detailed activity levels by the children's ages and the three specified types of extracurricular activities. Overall, 31 percent of 6- to 11-year-olds and 37 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds participated in sports activities, both down from their 1994 activity levels of 34 percent and 42 percent, respectively.

A similar decrease between 1994 and 2000 was seen for children participating in clubs, with one-third of children in both younger and older age groups participating in club activities in 2000 compared with 39 percent for the younger age group and 43 percent for older age group in 1994. However, during the same time period, participation in lessons increased: for children 6 to 11 years old, from 24 percent to 32 percent, and among older children, from 19 percent to 26 percent. Many extended care (or aftercare) programs in schools offer lessons to children and could account for the increases during this period.

While older children were more likely to participate in sports than younger children, participation in clubs did not vary by age, reaching about 34 percent of each age group. On the other hand, children in the youngest age group had a higher proportion (32 percent) taking lessons after school or on weekends than older children (26 percent). Older children may choose to cease lessons that no longer interest them.

Table 6.
Extracurricular Activities of School Age Children by Selected Characteristics: 1994 to 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Number of children		Percent participating in specified extracurricular activity					
			Sports		Clubs		Lessons	
	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years
Total children, 2000	**24,581**	**23,697**	**30.6**	**37.2**	**33.8**	**34.4**	**32.0**	**26.2**
Sex of Child								
Female	11,998	11,526	24.4	32.5	36.0	37.5	36.8	30.2
Male	12,583	12,171	36.5	41.6	31.8	31.4	27.5	22.3
Race and Ethnicity of Child								
White	19,340	18,678	33.4	39.2	35.7	36.4	33.5	27.5
Non-Hispanic	15,080	15,301	36.7	41.7	39.9	39.4	37.1	29.1
Black	4,061	3,745	20.6	30.5	27.6	25.0	25.4	19.4
Asian and Pacific Islander	846	834	20.4	25.7	27.1	31.5	36.0	33.1
Hispanic (of any race)	4,520	3,683	21.5	28.0	20.2	22.9	20.7	20.3
Marital Status of Parent								
Married[1]	17,858	16,787	34.7	40.2	37.2	37.9	36.1	29.3
Separated, divorced, widowed	4,047	5,431	25.1	30.3	26.7	27.7	22.5	19.8
Never married	2,676	1,480	18.6	28.3	22.1	19.1	20.0	14.2
Parent's Educational Level								
High school or less	11,990	11,665	23.5	29.6	24.9	26.2	21.5	19.6
Some college	4,385	4,110	31.1	40.1	36.0	37.6	35.1	28.6
Vocational or associate degree	3,236	3,420	35.1	39.8	40.9	39.6	37.6	29.1
Bachelor's degree	3,784	3,063	42.9	49.3	47.9	46.7	50.0	37.7
Advanced degree	1,186	1,440	48.9	58.4	52.8	52.6	54.6	41.2
Poverty Status[2]								
Below poverty level	4,379	3,476	15.9	24.9	22.8	23.2	18.6	17.9
On or above poverty level	19,663	19,861	34.3	39.6	36.6	36.6	35.3	27.9
100 to 199 percent of poverty	5,956	5,353	24.1	30.7	27.2	29.5	23.7	20.8
200 percent of poverty or higher	13,707	14,508	38.7	42.9	40.7	39.2	40.3	30.5
Total children, 1998	**24,095**	**23,345**	**31.7**	**39.4**	**34.4**	**35.3**	**30.8**	**26.9**
Total children, 1994[3]	**19,426**	**17,665**	**34.3**	**42.2**	**38.8**	**42.5**	**23.7**	**19.1**

[1]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[2]For families with incomes reported.
[3]Number of children varied by activity depending on those reporting valid answers and were approximately 19.4 million 6- to 11-year-olds and 17.6 million 12- to 17-year-olds.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data). Current Population Reports, P70-68, Table 11 (1994 data).

For both age groups, higher proportions of boys than girls tended to play sports: 37 percent and 24 percent, respectively, for 6- to 11-year-olds; and 42 percent and 33 percent, respectively, for 12- to 17-year-olds. On the other hand, higher proportions of girls than boys participated in clubs and lessons. Among children 6 to 11 years old, 36 percent of girls and 32 percent of boys participated in clubs, while 37 percent of girls and 28 percent of boys participated in lessons.

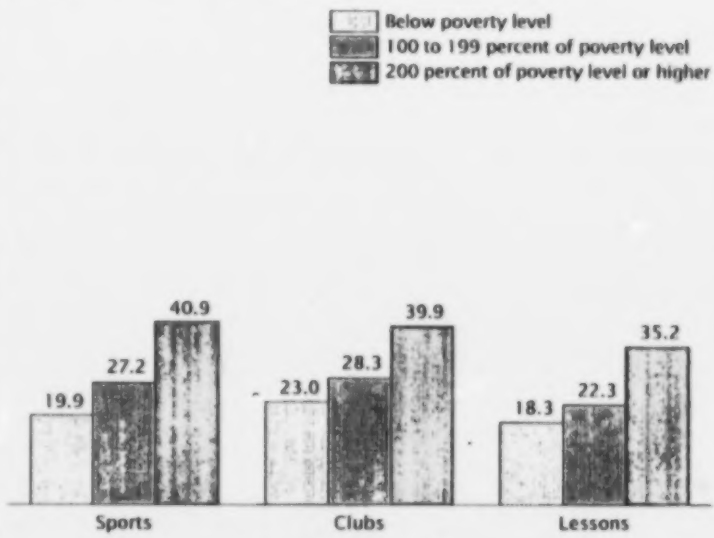
Among 6- to 11-year-olds, 37 percent of White non-Hispanic children participated in sports activities, higher than that recorded for the other race and Hispanic groups, which averaged between 20 and 22 percent and which were not significantly different from each other.

Sports activities may involve expenditures on the part of parents that may influence the participation level of the child. Only 16 percent of children 6 to 11 years old who are living in poverty participated in sports activities, compared with 34 percent of children living on or above the poverty level.

Among the grade-school-age children, Table 6 also shows that children living with two married parents—who may have more economic resources to spend on their children—participated to a greater extent (35 percent) than do children living with formerly married parents (25 percent) or never-married parents (19 percent). This type of activity, which often requires parental participation, may also be more likely to occur if a child is living with two parents rather than one parent. Also noted in Table 6 is that the level of participation is twice as high for children whose parents have advanced degrees (49 percent) as children whose parents have a high school or less level of education (24 percent).

Figure 3 shows that the poverty status of the child's family played an important role in participation in all three activities. A child who lived in a household with sufficient income to afford activities fees was more likely to participate in sports, clubs, or lessons. Within each specified activity, children whose family poverty status was 200 percent of poverty or higher had greater activity participation levels than children living below the poverty level or those whose poverty status was 100 to 199 percent of poverty. Children living below the poverty level might have an opportunity to participate in programs that have little or no cost, or, as in the case of playing sports for their schools, programs whose costs are offset by other funding sources.

Figure 3.
Percent of Children 6 to 17 Years Old Participating in Extracurricular Activities by Family Poverty Status: 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Wave 12.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Children's academic achievement in this report is analyzed by considering outcomes, such as being academically "on-track" (i.e., enrolled in school at or above the modal grade level for their age), taking classes for gifted students, changing schools, repeating grades, and being suspended.

Academically on-track

Nationally, 72 percent of children 12 to 17 years old were academically on-track for their age (see Table 7). Girls were more likely to be on-track than boys—79 percent and 69 percent, respectively.

Are students able to stay on-track, even when experiencing changes, such as a parent's divorce or attending a new school? Children 12 to 17 years old were more likely to stay on-track if their parents were married (74 percent), compared with those with separated, divorced, or widowed parents (67 percent), and those with never-married parents (66 percent). Changing schools had some affect on staying on-track: 73 percent of children who had never changed schools remained on-track, compared with 70 percent who had changed schools. Suspension from school, which can be an indicator of emotional or adjustment problems, was also closely related to being academically on-track: sixty-three percent of children who had been suspended were on-track, compared with 73 percent of children who had never been suspended.

Enrolled in gifted classes

The SIPP child well-being module also asked parents if their children were in a special class for gifted students or did advanced work in any subjects (Table 8). Thirteen percent of children 6 to 11 years old and 22 percent of children 12 to 17 years old were in such classes, which include honors and advanced placement classes in high school.

Table 7.
Children 12 to 17 Years Old Academically On-Track: 1994 to 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	All currently enrolled	Percent on-track
Total children, 2000	**23,008**	**71.8**
Age of Child		
12 years	3,848	74.5
13 years	3,857	73.7
14 years	3,947	73.4
15 years	3,772	75.7
16 years	3,983	68.5
17 years	3,602	64.5
Sex of Child		
Female	11,215	78.8
Male	11,793	68.5
Race and Ethnicity of Child		
White	18,149	72.3
Non-Hispanic	14,888	72.1
Black	3,636	68.4
Asian and Pacific Islander	817	80.4
Hispanic (of any race)	3,564	72.4
Marital Status of Parents		
Married[1]	16,340	73.8
Separated, divorced, widowed	5,250	67.2
Never married	1,418	65.6
Participation in at Least One Extracurricular Activity		
Participated in an extracurricular activity	14,054	73.9
Did not participate in an extracurricular acitvity	8,954	68.6
Poverty Status[2]		
Below poverty level	3,309	62.7
On or above poverty level	14,220	73.4
100 to 199 percent of poverty	5,199	68.2
200 percent of poverty or higher	14,165	75.4
Ever Changed Schools[3]		
Changed schools	9,215	70.1
Did not change schools	13,793	72.9
Ever Suspended		
Suspended from school	2,401	63.3
Never suspended from school	20,607	72.8
Total children, 1998	**22,782**	**71.1**
Total children, 1994[4]	**18,116**	**69.3**

[1]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[2]Families with income reported.
[3]Does not include the normal progression and graduation from elementary and middle schools.
[4]Based on those children for whom valid answers were reported (no allocation for nonresponse). Includes children who are not currently enrolled.

Note: Children are generally considered on-track when they are enrolled at or above the modal grade for their age (the grade at which most children of a given age are enrolled).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data). Current Population Reports, Series P70-68, Table 15 (1994 data).

Half (49 percent) of children 12 to 17 years old whose parent had an advanced degree were in gifted classes, compared with only 14 percent of children whose parent had attained a high school education or lower. The proportion in gifted classes was also higher for children aged 12 to 17 whose parents were married (24 percent) than for children living with separated, divorced, or widowed parents, or never-married parents (17 percent and 12 percent, respectively). Among 12- to 17-year-olds whose family poverty status was 200 percent of poverty or higher, 26 percent were attending gifted classes, compared with only 14 percent of children living below poverty. It is possible that these differences in gifted class enrollment reflect the availability of classes offered at the schools the children were attending.

Changing schools

Not including the normal progression and graduation from elementary and middle schools, 23 percent of children aged 6 to 11 and 40 percent of children aged 12 to 17 who had ever attended or been enrolled in first grade or higher had changed schools at some time in their educational careers (see Table 8). The higher number for older children is normal as these children have had more time to experience a change. Changing schools can be disruptive because children usually have to make new friends, adjust to new teachers, and become integrated into a different school setting and routine. A change in schools may have been prompted by a residential move, a change in school-district boundaries, failure at another school, or a change in their household structure or finances.

Table 8.
Academic Achievement of School Age Children„Selected Characteristics: 1994 to 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Gifted classes[1]				Change of schools[2]				Ever repeated a grade[3]				Ever suspended[1]	
	6 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		6 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		6 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		12 to 17 years	
	Total number of children	Percent in gifted classes	Total number of children	Percent in gifted classes	Total number of children	Percent changed schools	Total number of children	Percent changed schools	Total number of children	Percent ever repeated a grade	Total number of children	Percent ever repeated a grade	Total number of children	Percent ever suspended
Total children, 2000	**24,015**	**12.7**	**23,008**	**21.8**	**24,037**	**23.3**	**23,066**	**40.1**	**24,214**	**5.3**	**23,417**	**10.7**	**23,008**	**10.4**
Sex of Child														
Female	11,685	13.1	11,215	23.5	11,702	23.8	11,251	40.5	11,810	4.3	11,413	8.7	11,215	7.0
Male	12,330	12.3	11,793	20.2	12,335	22.8	11,834	39.7	12,404	6.2	12,004	12.7	11,793	13.7
Race and Ethnicity of Child														
White	18,882	13.4	18,149	22.5	18,905	22.5	18,214	40.1	19,046	4.9	18,465	9.5	18,149	9.0
Non-Hispanic	14,671	14.7	14,888	24.3	14,693	22.1	14,935	40.3	14,813	4.9	15,123	9.4	14,888	9.3
Black	4,005	10.0	3,636	18.4	4,005	27.9	3,642	39.2	4,029	7.7	3,710	17.2	3,636	17.9
Asian and Pacific Islander	818	11.8	817	27.5	818	19.9	821	35.2	818	2.6	824	6.4	817	5.3
Hispanic (of any race)	4,466	9.1	3,564	14.3	4,466	23.1	3,582	39.4	4,488	4.6	3,648	11.3	3,564	8.5
Marital Status of Parent														
Married[4]	17,393	13.6	16,340	24.1	17,410	21.3	16,389	38.6	17,544	4.4	16,552	8.2	16,340	8.1
Separated, divorced, widowed	3,994	10.3	5,250	17.2	3,998	29.1	5,280	45.8	4,020	7.3	5,397	15.9	5,250	16.2
Never married	2,628	10.2	1,418	12.4	2,628	27.7	1,418	36.0	2,650	7.7	1,468	20.5	1,418	16.6
Parent's Educational Level														
High school or less	11,741	8.6	11,220	14.4	11,746	24.1	11,277	39.0	11,837	6.4	11,509	13.6	11,220	11.6
Some college	4,249	15.4	4,012	22.3	4,258	25.0	4,015	44.8	4,305	4.9	4,076	9.9	4,012	11.7
Vocational or associate degree	3,172	13.4	3,352	23.4	3,176	22.4	3,367	41.4	3,198	4.9	3,390	8.7	3,352	9.9
Bachelor's degree	3,684	19.6	2,998	34.2	3,689	21.1	3,003	37.7	3,703	3.5	3,010	5.9	2,998	6.3
Advanced degree	1,169	21.2	1,424	48.9	1,169	18.2	1,424	37.2	1,172	1.4	1,431	4.9	1,424	5.7
Poverty Status[5]														
Below poverty level	4,239	7.6	3,309	13.7	4,244	26.6	3,334	41.6	4,268	8.7	3,416	19.3	3,309	14.5
On or above poverty level	19,249	14.0	19,364	23.4	19,267	22.4	19,413	39.6	19,416	4.5	19,653	9.2	19,364	9.5
100 to 199 percent of poverty	5,801	10.5	5,199	15.9	5,815	24.3	5,217	39.4	5,883	6.6	5,302	13.7	5,199	11.9
200 percent of poverty or higher	13,448	15.5	14,165	26.2	13,452	21.6	14,196	39.7	13,533	3.6	14,351	7.5	14,165	8.7
Total children, 1998	**23,704**	**12.7**	**22,782**	**21.4**	**23,734**	**18.7**	**22,869**	**43.5**	**23,835**	**5.8**	**23,204**	**12.1**	**22,782**	**11.8**
Total children, 1994[6]	**18,952**	**12.5**	**NA**	**NA**	**18,885**	**29.5**	**16,888**	**51.6**	**18,936**	**6.6**	**17,058**	**15.9**	**17,003**	**10.3**

NA Not available. The question on gifted classes was not asked of children 12 to 17 years old in 1994.

[1]Includes children currently enrolled in school.

[2]Includes children who have ever attended or been enrolled in first grade or higher. Does not include the normal progression and graduation from elementary and middle schools.

[3]Includes children who have ever attended or been enrolled in kindergarten or higher.

[4]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).

[5]Families with income reported.

[6]Based on those children for whom valid answers were reported (no allocation for nonresponse).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data). Current Population Reports, Series P70-68, Table 13 (1994 data).

which could be caused by a separation or divorce of parents. For example, a higher proportion of children 12 to 17 years old whose parents were separated, divorced, or widowed had changed schools (46 percent) than children with married parents (39 percent) or those with never-married parents (36 percent).

Black children 6 to 11 years old tended to change schools at a higher rate than did non-Hispanic White children, Asian and Pacific Islander children, or Hispanic

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children. These differences disappeared for children aged 12 to 17. All race and ethnic groups fell into the 35 to 40 percent range, with White, Black, and Hispanic children having virtually the same proportions who had changed schools (40 percent, 39 percent, and 39 percent, respectively).

Ever repeated a grade

Children who repeat a grade are not likely to stay academically on-track. Five percent of children 6 to 11 years old and 11 percent of children 12 to 17 years old had repeated a grade. Repeating a grade was more common for Black children of both age groups than for non-Hispanic White children, Asian and Pacific Islander children, or Hispanic children. Children aged 12 to 17 living below the poverty level were twice as likely to have repeated a grade (19 percent) as children whose family poverty status was 200 percent of poverty or higher (8 percent).

Ever suspended

Parents of children aged 12 to 17 were asked if their children had ever been expelled or suspended from school. Ten percent of children aged 12 to 17 (2.4 million) had been suspended at least once, and the suspension rate was twice as high for boys (14 percent) as for girls (7 percent). The proportion suspended was higher for Black children (18 percent), compared with non-Hispanic Whites (9 percent), Asians and Pacific Islanders (5 percent), and Hispanics (9 percent). Fewer children living with married parents had ever been suspended (8 percent) than children living with separated, divorced, or widowed parents (16 percent), or those living with never-married parents (17 percent).

Only 6 percent of children whose parent had earned a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree had ever been suspended, compared with 12 percent of those whose parent had either a high school education or less, or had some college education but had not attained a degree.

EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

The 2000 SIPP asked parents about their educational expectations for each child. Parents were asked both how far they would like their child to go in school and the educational level they thought their child would actually achieve. As their children grow up, parents gain insight about each child's educational potential; they have a clearer idea of the financial support they can provide; and their expectations and evaluations may change. Table 9 shows that the majority of children under age 18 had parents who *wanted* them to have a college education or beyond (86 percent). However, the proportion of children whose parents *thought* they would achieve a college education and beyond was only 79 percent.

The proportions of children whose parents wanted them to go beyond college differed widely according to the parent's level of education. Parents with advanced degrees were twice as likely as parents with a high school education or less to want their children to get an education beyond college (50 percent compared with 21 percent, respectively). When looking at whether the parents thought their child could achieve an education beyond college, expectations were lower by about 5 percentage points for children whose parent had an advanced degree and those whose parent had a high school education or less (45 percent and 16 percent, respectively). Conversely, 29 percent of children whose parents had a high school education or less were expected to achieve less than a college education, compared with only 7 percent of children whose parents had an advanced degree.

Thirty percent of children whose families were below the poverty level were expected by their parents to achieve less than a college education compared with only 15 percent of children whose family poverty status was 200 percent of poverty or higher. Only 17 percent of parents living below poverty anticipated that their children would go beyond college, compared with 25 percent of children living in families 200 percent above the poverty level. However, the majority of parents in both poverty statuses believed their children would be college graduates.

PARENTS' FEELINGS TOWARD THEIR CHILDREN

Parents in the 2000 SIPP child well-being module were asked how often they felt that their children were hard to care for, did things that really bothered them, took up more of their life than expected, and whether they felt angry with their child. Response categories that measured how frequently these feelings occurred were "never," "sometimes," "often," or "very often." Questions were only asked once of each designated parent; therefore, answers pertained to all their children. For two of the four questions on parental feelings, the most frequent answer category was "never"—their children were never hard to care for or never took up much time. The most frequent answer category for questions on how often their

Table 9.
Educational Expectations of Parents for Their Children Under 18 Years by Selected Characteristics: 1998 and 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	All children	Education level parent wants for child (percent distribution)				Education level parent thinks child will achieve (percent distribution)			
		Total	Less than college graduate	College graduate	More education and training after college	Total	Less than college graduate	College graduate	More education and training after college
Total children, 2000	**71,663**	**100.0**	**14.2**	**57.8**	**28.0**	**100.0**	**20.7**	**57.1**	**22.2**
Sex of Child									
Female	34,947	100.0	13.4	58.9	27.8	100.0	19.5	58.1	22.5
Male	36,716	100.0	15.0	56.8	28.2	100.0	21.9	56.2	21.9
Age of Child									
Under 12 years	47,966	100.0	12.6	58.1	29.3	100.0	18.0	58.9	23.1
12 to 17 years	23,697	100.0	17.4	57.2	25.4	100.0	26.2	53.5	20.3
Race and Ethnicity of Child									
White	56,694	100.0	13.4	58.9	27.5	100.0	20.2	58.2	21.6
Non-Hispanic	45,826	100.0	12.4	60.0	27.6	100.0	18.8	59.2	21.9
Black	11,377	100.0	16.7	53.0	30.3	100.0	23.6	52.7	23.7
Asian and Pacific Islander	2,509	100.0	9.2	55.5	35.3	100.0	11.8	57.3	30.9
Hispanic (of any race)	11,636	100.0	19.6	53.6	26.8	100.0	26.2	53.1	20.7
Marital Status of Parent									
Married[1]	51,885	100.0	12.1	58.3	29.6	100.0	17.9	58.5	23.6
Separated, divorced, widowed	11,538	100.0	19.3	58.3	22.4	100.0	27.8	55.6	16.6
Never married	8,240	100.0	20.1	53.8	26.1	100.0	28.8	50.4	20.8
Parent's Educational Level									
High school or less	34,168	100.0	21.0	58.3	20.7	100.0	28.9	55.0	16.1
Some college	12,482	100.0	10.4	60.0	29.6	100.0	18.2	60.3	21.5
Vocational or associate degree	9,426	100.0	9.4	60.4	30.2	100.0	15.2	61.5	23.3
Bachelor's degree	11,617	100.0	5.8	55.8	38.4	100.0	8.4	59.5	32.1
Advanced degree	3,970	100.0	3.3	46.5	50.2	100.0	6.5	48.3	45.2
Poverty Status[2]									
Below poverty level	11,714	100.0	22.9	55.2	21.9	100.0	30.4	52.8	16.8
On or above poverty level	58,526	100.0	12.3	58.3	29.4	100.0	18.5	58.1	23.3
100 to 199 percent of poverty	16,638	100.0	19.1	56.9	24.0	100.0	26.8	54.4	18.8
200 percent of poverty or higher	41,888	100.0	9.6	58.9	31.5	100.0	15.3	59.6	25.1
Total children, 1998	**71,088**	**100.0**	**14.3**	**59.6**	**26.1**	**100.0**	**22.1**	**58.2**	**19.7**

[1]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[2]For families with income reported.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data).

children bothered them a lot or how often they felt angry with their children was "sometimes."

Child hard to care for

Of the 39.8 million parents in the survey, 69 percent said they never felt their child was much harder to care for than most children (Table 10). By age of parent, a higher proportion of the older parents—those aged 35 and over—said "never" than those under age 25 (70 percent and 65 percent, respectively). This difference may reflect the fact that older parents usually have more experience raising children and observing other children being more difficult than their own. A greater proportion of married parents (71 percent) felt their children were never hard to care for than parents who were separated, divorced, or widowed, or parents who were never married (both 63 percent). Parents who were separated, divorced, or widowed had a slightly higher proportion (7 percent) stating that

Table 10.
Parent s Feeling Toward Their Children by Selected Characteristics: 1998 and 2000

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristics	All parents	Percent reporting that: Child is much harder to care for than most children		Child does things that really bother me a lot		Child takes up more time than expected		Parent feels angry with child	
		Never	Often or very often	Never	Often or very often	Never	Often or very often	Never	Often or very often
Total, 2000	**39,836**	**68.7**	**5.4**	**43.3**	**5.1**	**49.4**	**15.4**	**44.5**	**2.4**
Age of Parent									
Under 25 years old	3,164	64.5	6.2	49.7	5.0	50.9	17.2	53.2	1.4
25 to 34 years old	13,083	68.2	5.2	44.9	5.9	50.2	15.0	47.9	2.9
35 years and over	23,590	69.5	5.4	41.5	4.7	48.8	15.4	41.5	2.2
Race and Ethnicity of Parent									
White	31,557	69.1	5.6	43.1	4.9	50.2	15.2	43.7	2.2
Non-Hispanic	26,179	69.5	5.7	41.0	5.3	49.1	15.9	42.7	2.3
Black	6,220	68.7	4.7	42.8	6.8	45.8	17.1	49.1	3.1
Asian and Pacific Islander	1,534	65.7	5.6	52.3	3.0	51.9	13.7	49.3	2.0
Hispanic (of any race)	5,834	67.5	5.0	53.0	3.0	54.6	12.3	49.1	1.7
Marital Status of Parent									
Married[1]	27,885	71.2	4.8	44.6	4.0	52.2	13.8	45.2	1.9
Separated, divorced, widowed	6,902	62.8	7.3	38.5	7.8	43.2	19.2	40.9	3.6
Never married	5,049	62.8	6.3	42.4	7.7	42.6	19.2	45.9	3.5
Parent's Educational Level									
High school or less	18,477	66.8	5.6	43.7	6.1	49.4	16.2	45.4	2.7
Some college	7,143	69.4	4.5	43.2	5.4	47.9	15.2	42.8	2.5
Vocational or associate degree	5,442	71.1	5.6	41.3	5.0	49.5	15.1	43.2	2.2
Bachelor's degree	6,451	69.5	5.7	42.8	3.1	50.4	14.4	44.1	1.8
Advanced degree	2,322	73.5	4.7	46.3	2.1	51.7	13.7	47.8	1.7
Poverty Status[2]									
Below poverty level	5,392	61.6	7.3	40.2	8.1	44.1	20.1	44.3	3.5
On or above poverty level	33,989	70.0	5.1	43.8	4.6	50.4	14.6	44.5	2.2
100 to 199 percent of poverty	8,677	65.9	5.9	43.2	6.2	49.2	14.3	44.2	2.6
200 percent of poverty or higher	25,312	71.4	4.8	43.9	4.0	50.8	14.8	44.6	2.1
Total, 1998	**39,088**	**67.8**	**4.7**	**40.9**	**5.5**	**45.4**	**18.8**	**39.0**	**2.9**

[1]Married includes married, spouse present and married, spouse absent (excluding separated).
[2]For families with income reported.

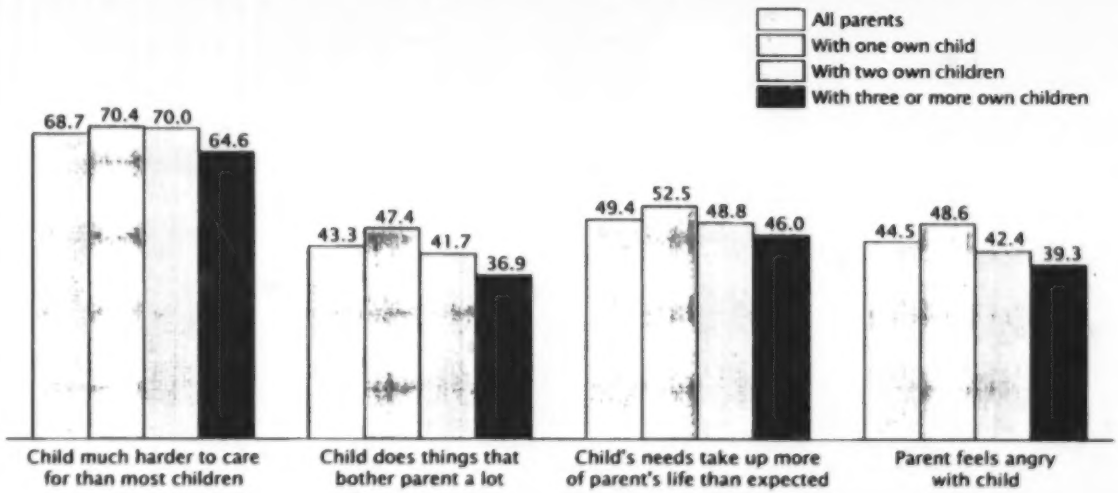
Note: The questions on feelings toward each designated parent's child or children were only asked once and refer to all children living with the designated parent. The omitted category of response, sometimes, would be calculated by subtracting the never and often or very often percent responses from 100 percent under each question item.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Waves 6 and 12 (1998 and 2000 data).

their child was often or very often harder to care for than most children, compared with married parents (5 percent). The challenge of caring for a child alone after sharing the responsibility with another person and possibly having had a second income may cause a parent to perceive his or her child as harder to care for than other children.

Seventy-one percent of parents who were living 200 percent or more above poverty never felt that their child was harder to care for than most children, compared with 62 percent of parents who lived below poverty. Examining the responses of parents who felt their child was often or very often harder to care for than most children, 7 percent of parents below poverty status felt that way, compared with 5 percent of parents who lived at 200 percent of poverty or higher.

Figure 4.
Percent of Parents Responding "Never" to Questions About Frequency of Difficulty With Their Children by Number of Own Children in the Family: 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 Panel, Wave 12.

Figure 4 shows that parents with three or more own[14] children were less likely than parents with one or two own children to say that their child was never harder to care for than most other children (65 percent compared with 70 percent, respectively).

Child does things that bother me a lot

Over one-half of parents (52 percent) said that "sometimes" their child does things that bother them a lot.[15] Only 5 percent of all parents felt this happened often or very often, while 43 percent said their child never did things that bothered them a lot. Non-Hispanic White parents and Black parents were the least likely never to have felt that their child did things that bother them (41 percent and 43 percent, respectively), compared with Asians and Pacific Islanders (52 percent) and Hispanics (53 percent). Considering the number of children in the family, the data again show that those with three or more own children were less likely to say that their children never did things that bother them a lot (37 percent) than parents who had one own child (47 percent) or two own children (42 percent, see Figure 4).

Child takes up more time than expected

One-half of all parents never felt that their children's needs took more of their life than they expected. However, 15 percent replied that often or very often their children's demands used up more of their time than they had expected. Married parents were more likely never to have felt their child was taking up more time than expected (52 percent), compared with separated, divorced, or widowed parents and never-married parents (both 43 percent).

Twenty percent of parents living in poverty felt their children often or very often took up more of their life than expected, in contrast with parents 200 percent or more above poverty (15 percent). Parents with only one or two children were more likely never to feel that their children took up more time than expected (53 percent and 49 percent, respectively) than parents with three or more own children (46 percent, see Figure 4). In general, having a larger number of children in a household creates greater demands on parents' time than fewer children.

Parent feels angry with child

Only 2 percent of all parents responded that they felt angry with

[14] Own children are the natural-born, step, and adopted child of the householder.

[15] The response category "sometimes" was calculated by subtracting the "never" and "often or very often" percent responses from 100 percent under each question item in Table 10. The questions on feelings toward each designated parent's child or children were only asked once and refer to all children living with the designated parent.

their child often or very often. Most parents (53 percent) "sometimes" felt angry, while another large proportion (45 percent) said they never were angry with their children. In fact, regardless of the characteristics of the parents, 40 percent or more of the parents said they never were angry with their children. Non-Hispanic White parents were the least likely never to have felt angry at their child (43 percent), compared with Black parents, Asian and Pacific Islander parents, and Hispanic parents (all 49 percent). Parents with the most own children were least likely never to have felt angry with their child (39 percent), compared with parents with one or two own children (49 and 42 percent, respectively).

SUMMARY

This report describes some of the important aspects of the well-being of children: daily interactions with parents, participation in extracurricular activities, academic achievement, educational expectations of parents, and parent's feelings toward their children.

Relative to children living with a single parent, children living with married parents tended to have more daily interaction with their parents, such as sharing meals and talking with one another. Children with married parents experienced more restrictions on TV viewing and were read to more often than children in single-parent families. One benefit of living in a two-parent household—whether married or unmarried—is illustrated by the number of times both parents read to their child at home. Children of married parents were also more likely to participate in extracurricular activities and to progress more steadily in school by keeping academically on-track. Children whose parents had higher levels of educational attainment were more often read to, required to follow rules about television, and more frequently participated in extracurricular activities. They also were more likely to be in gifted classes, but less likely to have been suspended or to have repeated any grades. Parents with high levels of education were far more likely to think their child would complete more education and training after college than parents with less education.

Family structure and income affect children's everyday life, whether watching TV at home or participating in after school activities. Parents' interactions with their children and their feelings toward their children influence their children's future.

SOURCE OF DATA

The population represented (the population universe) in the 1992, 1993, and 1996 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States. SIPP is a longitudinal survey conducted at four-month intervals by the Census Bureau. The data in this report were collected from December 1999 through March 2000, from December 1997 through March 1998, in the 12th and 6th waves (interviews) of the 1996 SIPP and from October 1994 through January 1995 in the 9th wave of the 1992 SIPP and the 6th wave of the 1993 SIPP.

Although the main focus of the SIPP is information on labor force participation, jobs, income, and participation in federal assistance programs, information on other topics is also collected in topical modules on a rotating basis. The institutionalized population, which is excluded from the population universe, is composed primarily of the population in correctional institutions and nursing homes (91 percent of the 4.1 million institutionalized population in Census 2000).

ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES

Statistics from surveys are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level. This means the 90-percent confidence interval for the difference between the estimates being compared does not include zero. Nonsampling errors in surveys may be attributed to a variety of sources, such as how the survey was designed, how respondents interpret questions, how able and willing respondents are to provide correct answers, and how accurately the answers are coded and classified. The Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the production process including the overall design of surveys, the wording of questions, review of the work of interviewers and coders, and statistical review of reports to minimize these errors.

The Survey of Income and Program Participation weighting procedure uses ratio estimation whereby sample estimates are adjusted to independent estimates of the national population by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to undercoverage, but biases may still be present when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other variables in the survey is not precisely known. All of these considerations affect

comparisons across different surveys or data sources.

For further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates including standard errors and confidence intervals, go to *www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/sourceac/s&a96_040501.pdf* or contact David Hall of the Census Bureau Demographic Statistical Methods Division on the Internet at *david.warren.hall@census.gov.*

MORE INFORMATION

The report as well as detailed tables for both 2000 and 1998 are available on the Internet (*www.census.gov*); search for child well-being data by clicking on the letter W in the "Subjects A to Z" section of the Web page and selecting "Well-being /Dynamics of Economic Well-Being." The previous report, *A Child's Day: Home, School, and Play (Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being)*, with 1994 data, is also found on this page.

Other research on child well-being from the SIPP can be found in the following reports: Jason M. Fields and Kristin E. Smith, *Poverty, Family Structure, and Child Well-Being: Indicators From the SIPP*, Population Division Working Paper Series, No. 23, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 1998; Kristin E. Smith, Loretta E. Bass, and Jason M. Fields, *Child Well-Being Indicators From the SIPP*, Population Division Working Paper Series, No. 24, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 1998. Both of these papers are also on the Internet on the "Population: Working Paper," section under "Subjects A to Z."

CONTACT

For additional child well-being information, you may contact the author of this report in the Fertility and Family Statistics Branch on 301-763-2416. You may also contact the author of this report by e-mail.

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USER COMMENTS

The Census Bureau welcomes the comments and advice of users of its data and reports. If you have any suggestions or comments, please write to:

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